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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT

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DATE DISTR. 21 April 1955

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. In general, members of the PS (Pohranicni straz - border guard) who were [redacted] working in the "restricted zone" of the Tachov area became rather friendly. [redacted] this was due to the fact that the guards had very little contact with the civilian population. PS members were allowed no free time, probably because the policy was to isolate them completely from the civilian world so that they could not come into contact with anyone who might try to bribe them or solicit information from them. [redacted] the guards enjoyed talking with him, as they would enjoy talking with anyone from the interior of the country. [redacted] the PS members performed their duty on the border simply because it was assigned to them; [redacted] no PS member [redacted] performed his duty with enthusiasm.
2. The guards [redacted] expressed their dislike for the service and were very glad they would soon be discharged. The commander of the PS unit in Pavlova Hut (N 49-47, E 12-29), a married lieutenant with no children who was about 23 years of age, [redacted] "This place is for idiots, but I can do nothing but stay since it is required by Party discipline." If PS members tried to qualify for promotion, [redacted] it was only because of the privileges they would receive. [redacted] one PS member [redacted] had been promoted to the rank of sergeant, not because of diligent patrol service but simply because of his correct military behavior.

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3. Not only Communists were called for service in PS units; non-Communists who were expected to be easily influenced by Communist propaganda were also assigned to these units. However, [redacted] doubt [redacted] very much that this propaganda had the desired effect and [redacted] the correct behavior of PS unit members was the result of strict disciplinary measures. The guards knew that they must protect the border at any cost and that violation of this order meant severe punishment. [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] military discipline and the general situation in the border areas had a great influence on PS members, making them very nervous and cautious and forcing them to make snap decisions on the spur of the moment.
4. [redacted] a PS member who guarded certain buildings in the city of Tachov (N 49-48, E 12-38) [redacted] had violated a disciplinary rule and had been sentenced to 14 months in prison. He was pardoned after serving only seven months but was not allowed to return to duty on the border.
5. The PS members [redacted] were of the opinion that living conditions were not too much better in Germany than in Czechoslovakia. They based their opinions on discussions they had with the German border police concerning wages and the general situation in Germany. The PS members, however, never stated that they believed conditions were worse in Germany, thus indicating they did not believe the domestic propaganda which claimed the situation was much worse in Germany than in Czechoslovakia.
6. At night two guards were assigned to each 300 meter section of the border. [redacted] One of the guards stated that they make it a practice for one guard to sleep while the other keeps watch to see that they are not surprised by their military supervisors. [redacted] there were many walking patrols guarding the border during the day, especially when visibility was good; in clear weather the watchtower guards could have good control over the areas they observed. [redacted]
7. When patrolling in the "restricted zone", it was the policy of the guards to avoid being seen from the German side of the border; therefore, they kept to certain paths marked in the terrain or, when not on these paths, they tried to keep behind cover. When a mission was to be performed by the PS members in the territory between the border line and the obstacles, at least two guards always had to be together. Even the commander had to be accompanied by another guard.
8. The guards complained that during an alert they had to live out in the terrain like animals, sometimes for as long as three days, and often received no food for an entire day. An alert was called when anything suspicious occurred in the border area, when someone escaped from the Jachymov Uranium Mines, or when agents crossing from the West were expected. [redacted]

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9. Guards were instructed not to shoot in a manner which would cause bullets to fall on German territory. They said that some kind of an international agreement existed which prohibited shooting of this kind.
- guards were ordered not to let anyone cross the border under any circumstances. No excuse was accepted if anyone escaped across the border in a sector for which a guard was responsible. If it were established that someone slipped across the border, the guards were court-martialed, regardless of whether or not they could have prevented it.
10. commander of the PS unit in Pavlova Hut (see paragraph 2 above) carried a submachine gun, a pistol, and field glasses. Another time he was accompanied by two guards -- a sergeant who carried a pistol and a submachine gun and another guard who carried a submachine gun only. They had field glasses manufactured by Meopta. On still another occasion, one guard carried a trip-wire flare rocket. The uniforms of PS members were the same as regular army uniforms, except that the facings and epaulets were dark green and there were dog-head insignia on the facings.
11. There were barbed wire obstacles and trenches in the Zebraky (N 49-43, E 12-35) area close to the eastern side of the delimitation line dividing the interior of the country from the "border zone". (For exact location and description, see pages 4 and 5.)
- the obstacles and trenches were not more than five years old, judging by their appearance
- Part of the land surrounding the obstacles and trenches was cultivated by private farmers but most of the land lay fallow. State farm officials complained that the obstacles and trenches would hamper mechanized cultivation of the area which was to become state farm property.
- similar barbed wire obstacles southwest of Bazantov, located north of Zebraky, and obstacles about two kilometers west of Halze (N 49-50, E 12-35). The latter obstacles were intercepted by the road running from Pavluv Studenec (N 49-48, E 12-29) to Halze. This would indicate that the obstacles were erected at intervals in a complex which followed the line dividing the interior of the country from the "border zone" on its eastern side.

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Legend: Location of Barbed Wire Obstacles and Trenches in the Zebraky Area (See Memory Sketch, page 5)

1. Approximate delineation of the line dividing the interior of the country from the "border zone".
2. Barbed wire obstacles. Between points A and B the barbed wire was attached to corroded sharp-pointed iron poles. The wire was irregularly interwoven to a depth of about one meter; the obstacles were about 1.3 meters high.

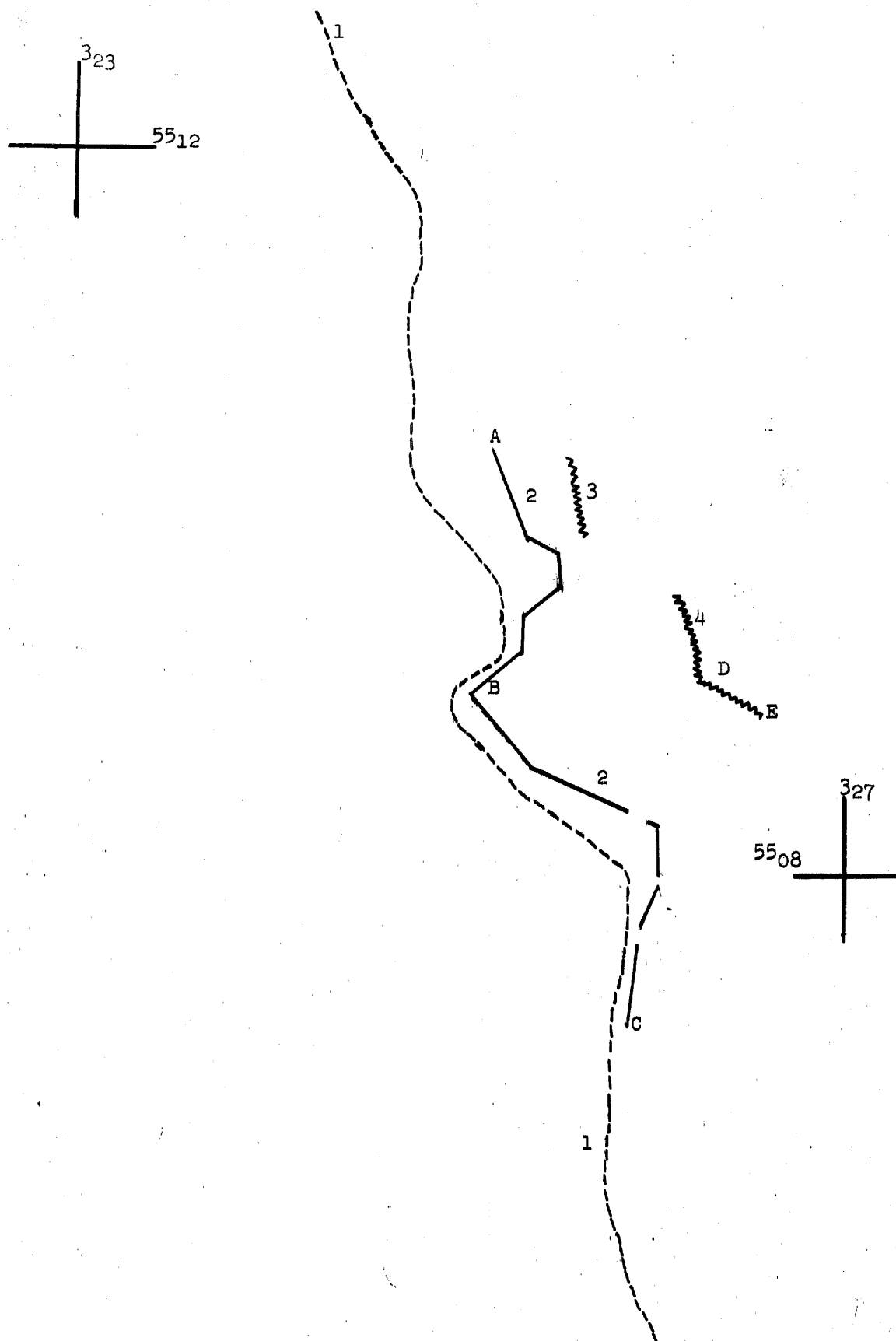
Between points B and C were three lines of the same type poles as mentioned above. They were also irregularly interwoven with barbed wire. The obstacles were about 1.3 m. high and 1.5 to 1.8 m. wide. The barbed wire was not corroded and it was possible to slip carefully through it during the day. The line of obstacles was interrupted only at points where roads cut through it. The poles were made of iron bars which were twisted in such a way that two loops were formed and wire was strung through the loops.

3. Trenches -- about 1.2 m. deep and about .8 m. wide. The condition of these trenches was deteriorating.
4. Trenches (same as point 3 above). The trenches located between points D and E were reinforced with impregnated wooden boards on the sides. The tops were covered in sections with boards and earth.

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